

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966

AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

FAMILY AND KINSHIP

145

around the house, or just relaxing. A man with few sons and very little land will have to continue to work the land well into his old age.

Although the reasons for family division are varied, there are standard procedures for implementing the process. The actual division is carried out through the customary process of mediation by a person called in to help work out an amicable settlement. This man may be a *tsu* relative, a respected fellow villager, or a maternal relative. Family division entails the equal division among all sons of all property belonging to the large family. All the land must be evaluated according to its productive capacity and location. Where the amount of land cultivated is very small, the members of the family may in rare instances agree to draw lots. The winner of the drawing gets all the land and pays his brothers for their share; they may then go to the city to support their families.

In the division of the house, each new *chia* retains its own apartment or rooms. The family's large brick stove usually goes to the oldest son, while the others use small charcoal stoves until they can build their own brick stoves. Sometimes, until they are well settled under the new family arrangements, the *chia* of the younger brothers may continue to use the original family kitchen and stove.

Although the division often results from or causes bad feelings between the newly formed *chia*, there is a great deal of interaction among the members of the family even after the family property has been divided. Such related families frequently share in the use of certain tools and farm implements, either through mutual lending or joint ownership. Since they are both relatives and neighbors, such families may also continue mutual aid and cooperation with one another in everyday tasks.

THE "ANCESTRAL GROUP"

Perhaps one of the most important unifying factors which joins divided families, as well as *tsu* organizations, is their joint religious activities. Although economic reasons may have divided the larger family, certain religious ceremonies continue to be a joint function. Ancestor worship and participation in funeral rituals for patrilineal relatives are two of the most important religious activities for the family. The one part of the house excepted from the division is the central room known as the *kung t'ing*, which contains the family's ancestral tablets, altar, and sometimes statues of gods which are owned jointly by the families. The room and its contents continue to be the common property of all the members of the separated families.

The conjugal families which now form independent *chia* (economic families) in their turn begin the process of expansion into joint or

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FAMILY AND KINSHIP

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stem families as sons marry and have children; they may ultimately go through a similar process of division. In this manner, over a few generations a larger patrilineal kinship group develops which takes on the activities and functions of a *tsu* organization and is considered to be such by its members. The original *kung t'ing* is retained and continues to be used for the common religious activities of the enlarged kinship group. In Hsin Hsing, as the patrilineal kinship group expands, brothers often keep their own immediate ancestors' tablets, such as that of their parents' and sometimes grandparents', in a semi-formal *kung t'ing* in their own quarters. However, ceremonies honoring the earliest ancestors are still held in the main *tsu kung t'ing* and are attended usually by representatives of all the *tsu* families. If a family moves permanently from the village to the city, it might make an entirely new copy of the ancestral tablet so that all of its own recent ancestors can be worshipped in the family's new locale.

Thus, the kinship group or, when it grows large enough, the *tsu* remains unified or at least is regularly unified on certain occasions as a "religious family." Kulp (1925:145-146) has called it "the practical unit of ancestral worship." The religious family "becomes a conscious unit only during the ceremonies of ancestral worship and varies according to the ancestor worshipped at any one time. It thus includes all those persons who ordinarily come together for ancestor worship." Only direct ancestors (or forebears considered to be such) are worshipped. A religious family is thus composed only of relatives who share common descent from a direct ancestor. The size of the family varies accordingly. While a *tsu* of over a hundred people, like the Huangs in Hsin Hsing, form a religious family to worship their founding ancestor, only the several *chia* of several brothers make up the religious family which combines to worship their deceased father, since he is not the direct ancestor of his brother's children or the other members of the *tsu*. The size and composition of a religious family is thus a function of the ancestor worshipped on any occasion. Thus, one notes that in Hsin Hsing village, when the members of a *tsu* worship their founding or earliest ancestors (whom they share in common), the *tsu* and religious family are identical. At other times a functioning religious family may be only a small portion of the *tsu*.

The newly separated households of the religious family function as a conscious unit for more than the actual ceremonies of ancestral worship. Although attendance at the ceremonies is frequently limited to representatives of each *chia*, other family members are drawn together by the organization, planning, and economic cooperation frequently necessary for such worship. An *esprit de corps* unifies the families in ancestor worship as well as in their mutual participation in rituals upon the death of a *tsu* relative.

[182]

FAMILY AND KINSHIP

147

This appears to be especially true in Hsin Hsing village where the *tsu* groups are small and so have little, if any, income from corporate land holdings. A large *tsu* with income from corporate land has a formal organization for the carrying out of ancestor worship or funeral arrangements. The more casually organized *tsu* of Hsin Hsing, however, must organize themselves for each occasion, and most *chia* must actively contribute both time and money.

Therefore, whenever worship of an early ancestor is to take place in one of the larger Hsin Hsing *tsu* compounds like those of the Huang or K'ang groups, each smaller *chia* sends incense, yellow paper money, and food to be used as sacrifices. There is no system of rotation under which each household in turn furnishes the sacrifices for all, although the care of the ancestral-worship room rotates from one *chia* to another at yearly intervals. In the Huang compound, for example, each of the four branches of the *tsu* which descend from the four sons of the *tsu*'s founding father takes over the responsibility for the *kung t'ing* for a year and then passes it on to the next branch. The Huang *tsu*, though the largest in the village, has no income from corporate land. The *chia* which has the annual responsibility for the *kung t'ing* must therefore buy incense and paper money for the regular worship in addition to keeping the room clean. The large K'ang *tsu*, on the other hand, has corporate land; the income from this property, through the agency of one of the elders of the *tsu*, covers any additional expenses in the operation of the *kung t'ing*, such as the repair of any religious objects belonging to the *tsu*. The men in a religious family or *tsu* who are respected and act as advisors on *tsu* matters are those who give their time and who are the first to do any necessary work or to give money for *tsu* purposes. However, whatever the type or size of *tsu* group, the worship of the ancestors follows a standard pattern, the only difference being the number of *chia* which participate.

Thus, it is only on limited occasions that the entire *tsu* worships the early ancestors held in common by all *tsu* members. These infrequent rituals are held in the main *kung t'ing* of the *tsu* compound, and male representatives of the *tsu*'s member families then seem to be the main participants. On such occasions, the main *tsu kung t'ing* serves as a kind of informal ancestral hall. However, on many other occasions, a small group worships their own more recent ancestors in this same main *kung t'ing* where their ancestors' tablets are housed and which then serves as a kind of private family or sub-*tsu kung t'ing*. Frequently, however, smaller sub-*tsu* groupings or families house the ancestral tablets of their recently deceased personal ancestors in their private, small, informal *kung t'ing* within their own apartment.

Most of the actual ancestral-worship rituals in the village are for the benefit of more recent ancestors of the sub-*tsu* groupings, and these are

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596 performed in either the private or main *kung t'ing* by the smaller
618 group. Usually, it is the women who have married into and become
769 part of the *tsu* who perform most of the actual ancestral-worship rit-
353 uals in Hsin Hsing and other villages of the area. M. Freedman
708 (1958:85) also notes that "The rites performed in the [ancestral] halls
562 [of the *tsu*] were conducted by and in the presence of men; their
daughters and wives played no direct part in the proceedings. In the
home, in contrast, it is clear that, whatever the theoretical inferiority
of women in the sphere of ancestor worship, they occupied a central
position in its performance."

596 Since there are no ancestral halls in Hsin Hsing village or in the
618 local area, this was the case. Worship of ancestors takes place exclu-
769 sively in the *kung t'ing* of the *tsu* or family. Ancestor worship per-
353 formed in a hall or in the *tsu kung t'ing* on certain few occasions
708 would be public, a formal observance for all to witness and theoretically
562 conducted by men. But more often in the Hsin Hsing area women con-
duct it. Ancestor worship, as it generally takes place, is on a small scale,
is private, and tends to be rather informal. As a result, the women, in
the presence of their children, usually take the main part in carrying
out ancestor worship. As some of the villagers noted, "The men are
busy, and the women are more religious anyway."

596 It is partially the unity of the religious family organization, which
796 continues even after the legal economic division of a larger family,
182 that gives the several newly independent *chia* a definite basis for co-
operation and a sense of common identity. Of this Freedman
(1958:23) has noted that the

[178] newly separated households were at least potentially members of one ancestor-
[423] worshipping unit in relation to recent forebears, and some forms of *ad hoc*
economic co-operation might be instituted between them. In other words,
while the formal division of house and land, which was a ritually established
rupture at one point in time, created legally independent households, the
relations between these households might diminish gradually in time rather
than undergo a sharp transformation from involvement to indifference.

596 Although a joint family may not continue for many generations as a
182 single unit, it derives continuity from the maintenance of the religious
581 family, with its function of ancestor worship. To ensure such continu-
597 ity, marriage and adoption are a primary and conscious concern. In
769 addition to providing the family with the necessary descendants to
worship the ancestors, the institutions of marriage and adoption en-
sure the security of the family through growth and expansion. For the
parents these institutions mean security and care in old age as well as
in the afterlife. "One's future is in one's children" is a common saying
which has had much meaning in traditional China and which is still
no less important in the changing Taiwanese village. Besides these

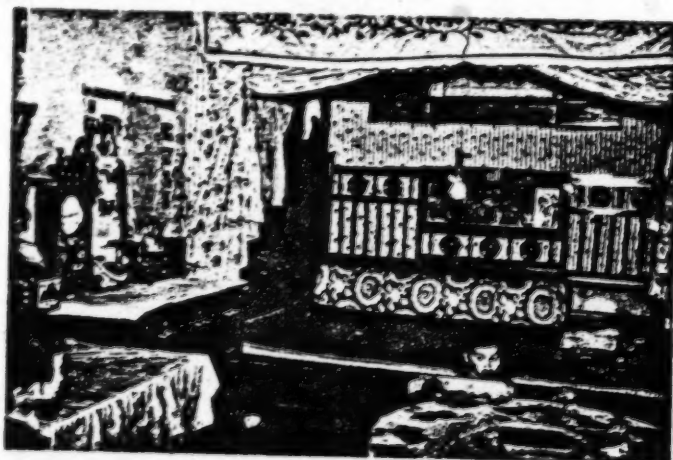
1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5

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ABOVE: Housebuilding in Hsin Hsing. BELOW: Bedroom of a village landlord's married son.



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LIFE HISTORY OF THE VILLAGER

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the deceased and their friends who participate in the funeral wear mourning clothes or armbands. The type of clothing worn by the relatives is determined by the nature of their relationship to the deceased. When a parent dies, sons and their wives clothe themselves completely in coarse white sackcloth, belting the garment with a hempen rope. They also wear a white cloth hat banded with hemp. The daughters and grandchildren of the deceased also wear garments of white cloth. The daughters and the female grandchildren wear hoods, and the male grandchildren wear white headbands. More distant relatives and friends who participate in the funeral usually wear an armband made of the same coarse white cloth.

Narrow strings of colored yarn several inches long worn on the mourner's arm band, headband, or hood are an additional way of indicating the mourner's relationship to the deceased. The color of the yarn or combination of colors worn indicates whether the mourner is related through the same patrilineal line, through the matrilineal or affinal side, or whether he is simply a friend. In these days most of the villagers are no longer clear which color indicates which relationship and have to ask the older people who should wear what color. However, frequently at different funerals in the village and area there appears to be no uniformity in the wearing of the colored yarn as a means for identifying the wearers' relationship to the deceased. These strings of yarn are worn by all relatives of the deceased throughout the mourning period.

Funeral Ritual

The funeral usually takes place within one or two days of the death. Most people prefer to complete the funeral as soon as possible to avoid undue expense and to enable things to return to normal, but some wealthy families prolong the funeral ceremony and delay the burial as a means of conspicuous display.

Prior to the arrival of the *tao shih*, a roofed three-walled shelter of bamboo and canvas is constructed to house their paraphernalia and an altar. When they arrive, they hang on its walls paper streamers lettered with moral sayings and a number of scrolls. These scrolls, often numbering thirteen or fifteen, depict the main Taoist and heavenly gods, the twenty-four filial acts (*erh shih sze hsiao*), and scenes of the underworld showing the courts of justice for the dead. The latter depict the punishments and tortures inflicted on the immoral and the various forms of reincarnation possible depending on the kind of life the deceased has lived.

Throughout the funeral ceremony, small children are led from scroll to scroll by their elders, usually their grandparents, while each scroll is explained to them. Great care is taken to explain the nature of the

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offers an acceptable explanation of the failure within the framework of the system.

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THE ANCESTRAL-WORSHIP ROOM OR KUNG T'ING

The village family or *tsu* perform most religious and magical activities in the *kung t'ing* where the statues of the gods and the ancestral tablets are housed. This is a central room in every village house (see house diagram in Chapter 2), whether it is a large *tsu* house with many apartments belonging to component families or the small house of a nuclear family. Some households which reside in the apartments of a large *tsu* house reserve a small part of one of their own rooms as a kind of *kung t'ing* where they maintain ancestral tablets bearing the names of their own deceased parents or their own most recent ancestors. However, these households continue to share in the maintenance of the main *kung t'ing* of the *tsu* where a tablet recording all the names of the *tsu* ancestors is housed.

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The *kung t'ing* of a Hsin Hsing village house is fairly representative of those found in the homes of the area and the homes of urban Taiwanese. (Today, usually it is only the mainlanders in Taiwan who do not have such a *kung t'ing* set up in their homes.) The appointments of the room include an altar which stands against the wall opposite the main entrance. Above the altar may hang two calligraphy scrolls which flank a scroll depicting the Buddhist goddess Kuan Yin. Statues of the main Taoist gods, a few in glass boxes, and the ancestral tablets stand on top of the altar. Incense receptacles and wine cups are placed before the statues of the gods. In front of the altar stands a large table on which food offerings are placed during worship. On ritual occasions this table is moved away from the altar and used as a dining table. The last appointment is an incense pot which hangs from the ceiling a few feet from the entrance to the *kung t'ing*, wherein the spirit of T'ien Kung, the highest god, is said to reside. He is not represented in statue form.

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In many respects the care and function of the *kung t'ing* indicate the nature of village religion and its relation to other aspects of village life. Although this room is the most important single site for the performance of ritual activities, it is by no means limited to "sacred" events. The family entertains guests here on both religious and non-religious occasions, and it also serves as a meeting place for the family to sit and talk. Because it contains an electric light bulb, children play or do their homework here, and women gather here to work on fiber hats. Perhaps the most "profane" of the uses to which this room is put, particularly if the *kung t'ing* belongs to only one or a few households, is its use as a storage place for sacks of rice or fertilizer and mounds of sweet potatoes.

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sweet potatoes. In the case of a jointly owned *kung t'ing*, several members of the large *tsu* who share in the ownership of a harvesting machine or winnower may store the machinery in the room.

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The multiple uses to which the *kung t'ing* is put account for its usually untidy and cluttered condition. It is seldom cleaned or dusted. Dust and ashes from burned paper money and incense accumulate during the period between the New Year's clean-up and the sanitation inspection of the village by the police and public office people.

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In the Hsin Hsing area, statues of the gods are housed in the *kung t'ing* of village families or in temples. Actually, only the very powerful gods, such as the goddess Matsu and some of the underworld gods, are housed in individual temples, usually in Lukang or some other town. The Earth God is the only god who has his own small temple in each village. His temple is known as the T'u Ti Kung Miao. In a few larger villages a temple sometimes is built to house all the statues owned by the community. But Hsin Hsing and other small villages of the area have no such temple, and village-owned statues are therefore maintained in the *kung t'ing* of private homes. When it is necessary to worship many gods at one time, the gods are invited to come from their resident *kung t'ing* to the single *kung t'ing* which is to be the center of worship for the occasion.

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Each year two different Hsin Hsing village families are charged with the responsibility of housing and caring for the statues of Ta Shih Kung, the village god, and T'u Ti Kung, the Earth God, and for arranging any events which concern these particular gods. Each family head is in charge of a single statue and is called a "pot master" (*lu chu*). (The term "pot" apparently refers to an incense or fire pot often used in the worship of a god.) The pot master is usually assisted by several men.

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The pot masters and their assistants are said to be chosen by the gods themselves at the annual formal celebration of the village god's birthday. On this occasion, the names of all the village family heads are read out singly "to the gods," who are asked to make their choice. To determine the god's answer, kidney-shaped blocks are thrown in turn by each family head. The ways in which the blocks fall are interpreted as either an affirmative or negative reply. A third possibility is that the god is laughing at you. The men who are rewarded with the most positive responses are named pot masters and assistants. Not infrequently, the old head of the household who is selected as pot master is already virtually retired. In such a case, it is realized that a son will handle the great responsibilities of the job.

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Occasionally in Hsin Hsing, pot masters have taken their responsibilities seriously enough to spend a great deal of their own money to refurbish an old and worn statue of the god. In one such instance, a

RELIGION AND MAGIC

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very poor but devout pot master for the Earth God realized that the villagers did not intend to contribute to the care of the god's statue. As a pious act he used his own money for this purpose. He was apparently motivated in part by his need for security within the village community. His family is poor and unrelated to any of the other large or small patrilineal kin groups in the village. He appears to have counted on this act to assure his family of assistance at any time of need in the future. And, in fact, his gesture was much appreciated by the village as a whole. It greatly improved his reputation and strengthened his family's relations within the village.

In addition to the village-owned statues which are cared for by the pot masters, there are also several statues of public gods which are owned by individual families and kept in their own family *kung t'ing*. Some families are more devout than others and may spend a great deal of money, sometimes as much as NT \$300 to 400 (US \$8-11), to purchase a statue of a god. These families generally own a statue of the Earth God and may sometimes purchase the statues of minor local gods to which they have taken a special fancy.

PRIESTS AND SHAMANS

The villagers depend upon specialists to communicate and deal with the gods and other supernatural spirits in their behalf. These specialists are either the Taoist priests known as *tao shih* or the shamans known as *fa shih* and *t'iao t'ung*. Since the powers of these men are not the same, the manner and degree to which they are able to function as intermediaries between the ordinary people and the supernatural varies widely.

The *tao shih*, as a member of a religious priesthood, functions purely as a religious practitioner. He is able to conduct rituals and ceremonies, but has no supernatural powers. The *fa shih* and the *t'iao t'ung*, on the other hand, have definite personal supernatural powers which enable them to cope with evil forces. Of the two, the villagers consider the *fa shih* the more powerful, because he himself has powers which enable him to confront the demons and exorcise them. The *t'iao t'ung* has no power himself but "only borrows his power from the gods"; it is only while he is possessed by a god that he has any supernatural powers.

There are no *tao shih* living in Hsin Hsing. Those who conduct services in Hsin Hsing are usually residents of Lukang. Almost all of them are ordinary family men who do not earn their livelihood by farming but have shops of some kind in the city. They are, so to speak, "their own boss"; their businesses can either be closed temporarily or some employee or member of the family can be left in charge for one,

342 either to the south or to the west. This is what the villagers refer
• 353 to as the kōng-thiā:, or "court," and it is here, on a high altar
778 facing the door, that one finds the family's ancestral tablets. In a
342 new house the kōng-thiā is invariably the cleanest, best cared for, and
most expensively furnished room in the house. If the family owns a
radio or a phonograph it will be found on a table in the kōng-thiā:,
or if they happen to possess a piece of calligraphy by some notable
this will be found hanging in the kōng-thiā:. Even the use of building
materials will usually reflect the central and public character of the
333 kōng-thiā:. In many of those village houses in which the floors of
778 the kitchen and bedrooms are tamped dirt, the floor of the kōng-thiā:
342 is concrete, while in one of the few houses in which even the bedrooms
and kitchen have concrete floors, the floor of the kōng-thiā is terrazzo.

778 As in so many other areas of life, the people of Hsiachichou think
654 of a house in terms of relative social status. The principles are very
simple. What is to the left of the ancestral tablets is of higher
status than what is to the right of the tablets, and what is near the
778 tablets is of higher status than what is distant from the tablets. The
554 guest of honor sits at the end of the table closest to the tablets
574 facing the door of the kōng-thiā:, while the host sits at the end of
the table most distant from the tablets facing the altar and the tablets.
The second most distinguished guest sits to the immediate left of the
guest of honor, or, as the villagers would see it, he takes the posi-
tion on the left side which is closest to the family altar; while the
third ranking guest is placed in the seat to the immediate right of the

* 572 independent units. Rather than a great extended family living under
5% one authority and one roof, what one typically finds in a large compound
[798] is a number of related but independent households. They will usually
[361] share the use of the kōng-thiā, the yard between the two wings of the
[342] house, the well if there is one, and the toilet, but each family will
[644] have its own bedroom and its own stove, even if this requires the
[554] building of two stoves in one kitchen.

179 The stages in the evolution of a house from a small one-family
778 structure to a large complex compound are clearly marked in the use and
356 care of the kōng-thiā. When a house is new and inhabited by a single
* 592 kē, the kōng-thiā will be always the best kept room in the building.
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• [353] The interior walls will be freshly white-washed; the floors will have
been swept daily; and the furniture will be as expensive as the family
can possibly afford. After the sons of the original family divide
their parental kē, the kōng-thiā and its furniture will begin to deteriorate, for their wives will be unwilling to devote their time or money
to what they regard as "public property." So long as their mother is
still alive, however, the room will never be in marked disrepair. What
work she cannot do herself, she will badger her daughters-in-law into
doing. The real decline of the kōng-thiā begins when she and her
husband die. There is then no one among the residents of the house who
has a responsibility towards the settlement as a whole, and as a
result no one is willing to give up the time or money to the upkeep
[539] of the kōng-thiā. As one of the most accurate of Chinese proverbs
states, "What is public is for everyone's use and is no one's responsibility." The inevitable result is that the kōng-thiā and its

Houses and Families

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any construction begins, the family and the geomancer make careful enquiries of priests, the elderly, even the gods, to be sure that the house is not placed on the site of an old temple or shrine. Indignant gods could bring untold misery on the family for generations. When construction is underway, the geomancer supervises the building of the ritually important cooking stove, a large, square, brick structure which is intimately tied to the welfare of the family. If it is clumsily built, or improperly oriented, misfortune or even death may come to family members. The family must also prevent those who bear them ill will from secretly inserting dangerous magical objects in the partially constructed stove. If the carpenters and bricklayers are ill-paid or disrespectfully treated, they too might practice various forms of witchcraft on the stove or on the main roof beam. The welfare of the family in both the present and the future generations is irrevocably involved in the construction of their home.

The original rectangle of a new rural home may vary somewhat in size, floor plan, or interior decoration, but the basic outline is the same for all. In the center of the front wall of each house are double doors which open into the guest hall. In most houses the floor of the guest hall is of beaten earth, the same as the other rooms of the house, but in more affluent homes the hall is distinguished by a concrete floor. The one village home with concrete floors throughout displays a terrazzo floor in the guest hall. This room is the stage on which a family presents itself to the world. Here one often finds a scroll of unexpected quality and such luxuries as a radio or a sewing machine; here also are the material representations of the family's charter, their ancestral tablets. These are flat, rectangular slips of wood, rounded on the top like grave stones, each inscribed in black ink with the posthumous name of a deceased member of the family. In every home these are arranged on a tall, narrow altar table set against the wall opposite the front door. To the foreign eye this altar is a clutter of religious paraphernalia, but there is order here if not neatness. The gods take precedence over the ancestors and their images are thus always to the right of the altar; men take precedence over women and thus the tablets of men are always to the right of those of their wives. Where the tablets are arranged in a small lacquer box, the more recently deceased are at the front of the box; where they are arranged on open shelves, the most distant ancestors stand on the top of the shelf at the head of a pyramid.

Individually, the tables have little significance. They are simply

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769 a focal point for burning offerings in honor of the parent who was respected if not loved. Collectively, however, they are the symbol of something larger. They are proof of an unbroken chain of men beginning in a distant past of splendid achievements, a past in which the insignificant farmer burning incense was represented by his own blood relatives even though not himself present. Through him and because of him the chain will pass to his sons and his son's sons into an equally splendid world of the future in which he will again be represented though not present. For many Taiwanese, both the humble who accept their religion without question and the sophisticated who scoff at its mysticism, it is this concept of being one link in an awesomely long chain, unimportant in themselves yet essential to the continuation of the chain, that gives meaning to what might be an unkind world of hard work and hunger. Every new bride brings hope of at least one more link in the chain of descent; every birth brings certainty. Both bride and infant are formally introduced to the ancestors shortly after their entrance into the family. At every death the ancestors are respectfully notified that another family member is passing over to their side of the altar.

574 Although the guest hall is also the ancestral hall, the scene of all
857 the ceremonies connected with them as well as many involving the hier-
• 353 archy of the gods, the room is not a sacred one. The altar is high enough
778 to be safe from the hands of toddlers and awesome enough to be safe
from their older siblings, but its very height provides underneath an excellent play house, train station, or opera stage for children on rainy afternoons. In the cold, damp days of winter, the guest hall is nearly always busy with the games of active youngsters. This is also the room in which tables are set up for the banquets that occur regularly throughout the year in rural Taiwan. The head of a household with [352] business interests meets his customers here at his desk against one wall. When he is not home, the children use the desk to do their homework. When a typhoon threatens, the farmer comes in every few hours to listen to the weather report, leaning casually against the altar. In the hot, humid days of summer, he may take a short nap here [356] after the noon meal, stretched out on the cool cement floor. The guest hall is kept somewhat cleaner than the other rooms in the house and is more frequently seen by strangers than the other rooms, but it is not sacred.

596 but it was undeniably different. At that time the family was not particularly large: Lim Chieng-cua was not yet married and his elder brother wasn't living at home. Speculative neighbors might have expected the Lims to build the usual bottom wing of the U, adding a new wing, if their prosperity continued, when Lim Chieng-cua married. Instead, the Lims built a truly large house, a house that is still the largest in Peihotien. Due to the unusual individuality that has given the Lims a reputation for wisdom and leadership—a habit of seeing as important the same things as their neighbors but not feeling required to follow the conventional paths to their goals—Lim Chieng-cua and his father departed slightly from the usual practice. Rather than building a U-shaped house, they built their house in the form of a hollow square, leaving a small open courtyard in the center. The front of the square, however, deviated in no way from the conventional base for a U-shaped structure, even to the doorways for expansion at each end. They surrounded the house and the drying ground in front with a dignified brick wall, a useful addition in the city, but one rarely found in the northern villages now that bandit attacks are no longer feared. They also built a long, handsome brick pig pen, a final touch which both amused and awed their neighbors.

[351] The Lims' guest hall is quite a large room, as it would have to be [333] to retain proper proportions with the rest of the house. It is floored [356] with lovely terrazzo, neatly and soberly. The floor is swept more often than in the other rooms and mopped every week or so. Puddles left by diaperless children are cleaned up fairly quickly, and concerted effort keeps the chickens and ducks from seeking shelter there. When we first moved into the house, there was no ceiling in the guest hall. The [353] whitewashed walls stretched up to heavy beams richly darkened by years of incense smoke. Unfortunately, in his restless desire to improve and change, Lim Chieng-cua added a ceiling to the room. His neighbors consider it attractive, but I missed the stark dignity of those beams.

* 596 The Lims' guest hall is simply furnished, far more simply than 184 their income requires. The prosperous families of Peihotien buy 352 heavy, overstuffed chairs covered in plastic. In summer they are a torment to sit on for more than a few minutes, and in winter they smell musty and develop miniature landscapes of mold. The Lims, whether from modesty or from a more developed sense of comfort, retain the old rattan chairs that are comfortable year around. The 596 family altar is another matter. Modesty here would not be a virtue: a 353 778

3: Wolf F-5 (1959-1961) 1968 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Peihotien

Houses and Families

31

man is expected to provide his ancestors with the best he can possibly manage. The Lim altar is tastefully simple, but of excellent wood and careful carving. The top is cluttered with the usual collection of ugly vases, gaudy lanterns, fussy brass candle holders, an elaborately carved wooden stand to hold the half-moon-shaped divining blocks, and some delicate pewter wine cups used only to offer drink to the gods and ancestors. Besides the ancestral tablets, the altar also holds two glass boxes containing images of the Goddess of Mercy and Tu Ti Kung. The latter are only decoration. Although they have vague protective powers, they are not imbued with the significance of the images residing in temples. On the wall behind the altar are a picture of the Eight Immortals and a large panel covered with the character for long life repeated in its hundred different forms. The only other decorations in the room are a Chinese painting on a scroll and various inscriptions painted or pasted over doors and windows to insure the family's good health, prosperity, and fertility.

When my husband and I moved into the Lim family home, we were delighted to be given as our sleeping room the tiny room directly in back of the family altar. The room is separated from the guest hall by only half a wall topped by a lattice screen. There was little chance of our sleeping through any of the religious ceremonies performed at dawn or during the night. Much to my surprise, the sleeping room that should have housed the head of the family became our office. It had been empty since the death of Lim Chieng-cua's father. Later, when I came to understand the structure and tensions of the family, I was impressed by Lim Chieng-cua's discretion, and the diplomacy with which he had solved a vexing problem. At the time, I was simply pleased at the ease with which we had inserted ourselves into the very center of a Taiwanese family. We had little peace and quiet, and no privacy, but for our purposes the situation was ideal.

The remainder of the Lim's front wing is taken up with sleeping rooms—Lim Chieng-cua and his wife and six children on one side, his elder brother's widow, Lim A-pou, her married son and his family on the other. At one end, in a room that would have been the kitchen in a smaller house, is the dining room, one of the few in the village. Its elegance is confined to its title. Though fairly large, the room is cluttered with crocks of pickled vegetables, the big rice bin, a foot-treadle sewing machine, and odds and ends of farm equipment. In the center of the room is a high, round eating table with an assortment of tall stools around it. The stools are drawn from those stacked in the

*596 corner with a dozen or more table tops, stored there until needed in
342 the guest hall for big feasts. Off the dining room, in the side wing of
[352] the house, is another sleeping room. This room is occupied most of the
[513] time by Lim A-pou's unmarried son, but he usually has to share
[192] the tatami sleeping platform with visiting children, male relatives, and
whatever hired hands happen to be living in the house. Beyond this
room is the busiest room in the house, the kitchen. Except on the
coldest or stormiest days, the door between the kitchen and the small
internal courtyard is kept open for light and ventilation. Most of the
floor space is taken up by the huge brick cooking stove which boasts
two, rather than the usual single, shallow cooking pans. One corner is
filled with a heap of long paper strips, residue from Lim Chieng-cua's
[372] cement bag factory. The paper is twisted into hanks and fed into the
stove by the women as they cook, by children when they can be
caught, and, on cold days, by the men, if they have time to lounge
before the evening meal. The walls are dark and dirty with accumula-
[415] tions of smoke and grease. Baskets, rice cake molds, tea kettles, and
[352] various other cooking utensils hang at random from pegs. Two closed
[412] cupboards hold dishes, rice bowls, cups, chopsticks, and bits of food
that need protection from the animals that wander into the house. The
kitchen has a convenience that is the envy of every woman in the
village and that was a source of considerable misgiving to me. The
[312] well and the open cistern into which the water is pumped are located
[231] in the kitchen itself. My uneasiness arose from the fact that the next
[54] room contained, besides another small stove for the preparation of pig
[177] food, the Japanese style toilet. What we euphemistically refer to as
"night-soil" is stored until needed for the fields, or until the pit is full,
not ten feet from the water supply.

*596 I was never sure just how the wing across the back of the house
342 had been used formerly, but it may have been the original location of
122 the cement bag factory. When we arrived, part of it was used for
114 storage and part of it was taken up with the small bathing room. The
storage room was cleared for us to use as a dining room and a
sleeping room for our cook and our interpreter. Our long-suffering
cook acquisitioned an alcove in the hallway to the bathing room for
her coal oil stove. The rest of the back wing was occupied by another
family of renters during the first part of our stay, but when they left
we took over this space to house our expanding staff and to provide
ourselves with a much needed testing room.

chapter 6

[P. 59]



LIM SO-LAN:

A

SECOND

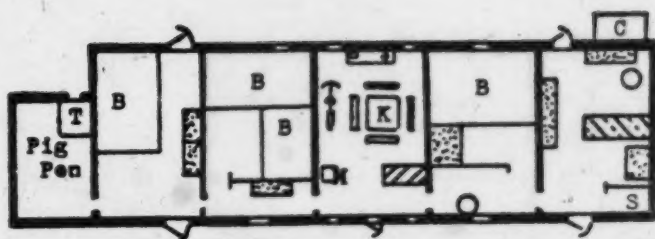
WIFE



About twenty years ago a former villager who still owned a building site in the heart of Peihotien decided that his land should be earning money. On it he built a long brick building that looks very much like a warehouse. He cut four doorways in the front and a smattering of windows and fitted the interior into four separate apartments. Two of the apartments were sold to their present occupants; the other two are leased by families who came to the village within the last ten years. All four families are fragments. They each have an ancestral altar in their guest halls, but two of the altars, though littered with images of gods and ritual paraphernalia, lack ancestral tablets. There are ancestral tablets on the other two altars, but the surnames on them are not the same as that of the family who burns incense before them. The apartments are spacious, in good repair, and in all but one case show evidence of an adequate income. But, the people who live in them are not families in the Taiwanese sense of the word. Their past is not tied to a neat line of descendants; their present is in a house that displays no confidence in the future—wings cannot be added on to an apartment to shelter future generations of married sons and grandsons.

Lim Hue-lieng bought the largest apartment in this row house when he moved his second wife and his daughters out of his father's house. Lim So-lan still lives there with her two daughters, her eldest daughter's husband, and her three grandchildren. She is in her middle forties now and looks her age. She wears the modified Western clothes

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• 353
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- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| S - Shower | T - Toilet |
| [Symbol] - Closet or Shelf | B - Bed |
| [Symbol] - Kitchen Stove | C - Chicken Coop |
| [Symbol] - Desk | K - Immortal's Table and Benches |
| [Symbol] - Ancestral Table | M - Sewing Machine |

Figure 4. Typical Sanlei House Plan with Furnishings

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[77] A small room with a hard surface or wooden floor for
baths is often found in the kitchen although a kind of
dishpan in the kitchen is also often used. Mixed bathing,
Japanese style, is not uncommon but is not typical either
and only occurs within a single family. Young to middle-
aged husbands and wives sometimes bathe together while
completely disrobed, occasionally with very small children.
Older women often bathe with small children. However,
there is seldom mixed bathing after age ten except for the
aforementioned married couples.

356
[556]
[235]
[24] Most houses are very dirty and cluttered as a clut-
tered house is a sign of wealth. Chickens and ducks leave
droppings as they wander in and out, sometimes accompanied
by small pigs.

346 burner sits outside the east door at one end. Inside,
• 353 directly opposite each of the three bright red doors are
[332] three large niches in the wall, each of which contains
[774] from five to nine gods.² In front of each niche are
flower stands, flower vases, and worship tables (see
Chapter VII for further details).

778 The temple is open from early in the morning until
857 late at night and is seldom empty. It is used by
794 children as a playroom, particularly on hot or rainy
days, but when the kids yell too loud or run too fast,
778 they are chased out. In the heat of the day, two or three
[517] men may be napping on the cool floor. Visitors to the
778 village sit on the benches and chat. An occasional chess
524 game is played on the bench with its crowd of kibitzers.
794 Village champions challenge salesmen at \$1.00 per game,
but salesmen rarely win, perhaps because they are being
politic but perhaps because the kibitzing is not neutral.
Advice is given frequently and openly and at times, it
appears as if the salesman has challenged the whole
794 village. Of course, there are a few people who come in
778 to worship or ask a question of the gods. In the evening,
[517] between dinner and bed-time, men sit on the porch or on
[494] the benches and chat. The local bus picks up and
discharges passengers in front of the temple.

[621] The temple belongs to the entire village: each
resident shares fully in its ownership and a new resident
is automatically a participant if he so desires. The

778 she would worship there twice each month the rest of her
[782] life and since he recovered, she has continued now for
about 25 years.

778 The final set of holy places are the various tombs
764 for as previously stated, the Sanlei area has many excel-
[435] lent burial sites. One elaborate tomb recently was con-
structed at a cost of over \$200,000.00 (\$5,000.00 U.S.).
[769] Villagers usually avoid outsider's tombs, but tombs of
their own ancestors receive periodic attention. There is
special worship on regular days throughout the year and
the individual worship as necessary. The tomb location is
considered significant for family prosperity.

The Home Worship Center or Kung T'ing

The kung t'ing, which is the central room in every
house or compound, is a ritual center but serves multiple
uses in addition as a main workroom, storage place, living-
dining room, etc. (Gallin, 1966:239-40). When a household
divides, there is usually a continued sharing of the kung
t'ing. The appointments are similar throughout the vil-

778 lage (see Figure 4). On the wall across from the main
769 door is the ancestral table (one foot deep, five feet long,
● 353 and four feet high) which holds wine cups in sets of three,
ancestral tablets if any, death memorial boards, perhaps
some god's statues and incense pots. A few tables have
only one pot but most have two or more, one of which will

usually be a god's pot. Extra pots are usually those with
769 separate surnames for worship of ancestors other than the
• 353 ones associated with the head of the household (see later
section).

Directly in front of the ancestral table is the
table of Eight Immortals (four feet square) with a bench
on each side so that it can comfortably seat eight. On
it are placed the food sacrifices to the gods and/or an-
cestors although it should be carried outside the door to
hold sacrifices for negative spirits who, after all,
should not be invited into the house. Because it often
rains and since most people do not want to bother, it is
usually placed just inside the door. It is pulled out
for dining at parties or for children to do homework.

[532] On the wall behind the ancestral table are usually
some scrolls, god's pictures, and perhaps the picture of
353 a dead ancestor. On the sidewalls are advertisements,
calendars, and pictures of living older members of the
household.

769 In almost all village households, each morning and
[562] each evening of every day someone worships in front of the
ancestral table with incense; usually the worshipper is a
male but it is permissible for a female to substitute. On
either the first and fifteenth or second and sixteenth of
each month, special rich foods are used for the evening
worship and consumed afterwards. On the regular periodic

000 important event: life crises, health, and economic. The

778 home is the central focus of worship and in all but two

• [353] village homes, the most elaborate and expensive furnishings

are those connected with worship. The second most impor-

tant center is the temple which is the most elaborate and

771 expensive building in the community. Although Sanlei vil-

624 lage is highly integrated, only for religion does the com-

182 munity gather in one place to act cooperatively with any

182 degree of frequency. At the li level, the temple and

632 religion serve a similar function except that in addition

771 to religion, politics and the school also feature commun-

771 ity-wide cooperation and joint activities. Religion is

602 the unifying element, at least on a manifest basis, of

182 larger kinship organizations such as the compound and

575 lineage and such voluntary organizations as the sworn

brothers and god's associations.

771 Religious values support the dictums of social con-

626 trol. Although there are reasonably high levels of skep-

182 ticism regarding the efficacy of religious acts, no man is

truly an atheist, i.e., although many claim not to believe

that a particular act works or has power for good or evil,

almost everyone is afraid not to perform the required

ritual when it is specified as appropriate.

771 There are so many kinds of religious and magical

183 functionaries, that one can be found to recommend almost

182 any kind of desired action. This recommendation supports

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